

*Statement of Anita DeFrantz
Vice President International Olympic Committee
Before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
April 14, 1999*

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Anita DeFrantz. I am testifying today in my capacity as a vice-president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). I also serve as a member of the Executive Boards of both the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) and the Salt Lake Organizing Committee (SLOC). I am a U.S. Olympian who won a bronze medal in the 1976 Olympic Games and a member of the 1980 Olympic team.

In addition to my Olympic responsibilities, which are done on a volunteer basis, I also have served as president of the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles since 1987. The Amateur Athletic Foundation is a private, non-profit institution created by the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee to manage Southern California's endowment from the 1984 Olympic Games. The Amateur Athletic Foundation awards grants to youth sports organizations, initiates regional sports programs, and operates the Paul Ziffren Sports Resources Center, which is designed to increase knowledge of sport and its impact on people's lives.

Mr. Chairman, the IOC recognizes the important oversight role Congress plays on the serious issues facing the Olympic Movement, and I would like to commend you for holding this hearing. The IOC is grateful you have included Jim Easton, an IOC member since 1994, and me in this hearing. I am pleased to be here to present the IOC's formal testimony.

During the Summer of 1894, 77 men from 14 nations gathered in Paris to create the modern Olympic Movement as a means of bringing the youth of the world together in athletic competition to promote international peace and understanding. To preserve the founders' vision of the Olympic Movement, a vision we all cherish, we must ensure that the Olympic ideals are never again compromised. I would like to take this opportunity to discuss the IOC's plans for reform.

The Olympic Movement

Before getting to the heart of my testimony, I thought it would be useful to briefly review the structure of the Olympic Movement for the Committee. The IOC's primary mission is to promote the coordination, organization, and development of sport and sports competition and to ensure the long-term viability of the Olympic Games.

The IOC recognizes international bodies, known as International Federations (IFs), that govern Olympic sports. FIFA, the organization that governs soccer, is an example of an IF that is undoubtedly well known to the Committee. The responsibility for recognizing Olympic Sports rests with the IOC.

The IOC also recognizes National Olympic Committees (NOCs) throughout the world. The USOC is one of 200 NOC's worldwide. An NOC is responsible for all Olympic-related activities within its territory. NOCs are autonomous within their own territories, provided they comply with the Olympic Charter.

One of the IOC's important missions within this Olympic structure is to help fund training programs in support of athletes around the world. These programs prepare athletes to compete in the Olympic Games, train coaches in the latest techniques, and teach national sporting administrators to better manage their countries' sports programs. Thanks to these programs, athletes from countries that could not afford training facilities, much less the airline ticket to the Olympic Games, now compete alongside their peers from wealthier nations. Partly because of these programs, athletes from all continents now participate in the Olympic Games, more than 40 percent of whom are women. Further, in the 1996 Atlanta Summer Games, over twenty athletes supported by the IOC's Olympic Solidarity program won medals.

It is not just developing countries who have benefited from these IOC programs. When I was a competitive athlete, U.S. training facilities for Olympic hopefuls were wholly inadequate. While Congress, the *Amateur Sports Act*, and the USOC deserve great credit for revitalizing America's athletic training programs, the IOC also has been a partner in these efforts.

The USOC is the only NOC which shares in Olympic Games television revenues, and it is estimated between 1998 and 2008, the USOC will receive approximately \$450 million from Olympic Games television revenues. This \$450 million represents roughly 25 percent of the Olympic Games television revenues. Additionally, the USOC receives more of the IOC's sponsorship revenues than all of the world's other NOCs combined. The IOC recognizes a strong USOC is important for the Olympic Movement and is proud of the support it provides the USOC.

The IOC is committed to ensuring talented athletes from all over the world have the support they need to compete in the Olympic Games. This commitment is evidenced by the fact almost 93 percent of the revenues received by the IOC from broadcast rights and sponsorships help to support the activities of NOCs and to underwrite direct costs of staging the Olympic Games.

IOC Action in Response to Recent Crisis

We all recognize for the Olympic Movement to thrive, the IOC must become more transparent and more accountable. Athletes, sports fans across the world, and sponsors all deserve an Olympic Games of which we can be proud.

Immediately after credible allegations of wrongdoing surfaced in late November 1998, the IOC President launched an investigation. To date, six IOC members have been expelled, four have resigned under threat of expulsion, and ten have received official warnings. Two IOC members remain under investigation. All future credible allegations of wrongdoing will be thoroughly investigated by the newly formed IOC Ethics Commission and unethical behavior will be appropriately punished.

Mr. Chairman, while the actions of some IOC members are indefensible and have saddened us all, it does bear mentioning most IOC members are dedicated volunteers. They take their Olympic oath seriously and embody the best of the Olympic ideals.

Vigilance on ethical matters, Mr. Chairman, is not enough. The IOC recognizes real structural reforms are necessary. The IOC has taken action on four fronts.

First, as an immediate step, the site selection process for the 2006 Winter Games has been changed. Visits by IOC members to candidate cities and visits by city officials to IOC members have been eliminated. Gift giving in connection with the bid city process has simply been banned. A selection panel, which will include athletes, will identify from six candidates the two most qualified bid cities. The entire IOC membership will then pick the host city. As part of its broader reform efforts, the IOC will implement a permanent site selection process in which we can all have faith.

Second, the IOC has established an Ethics Commission. As announced last Friday, this Commission is headed by Judge Mbaye, former Vice President of the International Court of Justice and an IOC member since 1973. He is joined on that Commission by five outside members: Howard Baker, former U.S. Senator; Javier Perez de Cuellar, former United Nations Secretary General, Robert Badinter, former President of the French Constitution Court; Kurt Furgler, former Swiss President; and Charmagne Crooks, a five-time Olympian from Canada. IOC members Kevan Gosper of Australia and Chiharu Igaya of Japan also will serve on this Commission. The IOC is particularly pleased that Senator Howard Baker, a man of great talent and even greater integrity, has agreed to serve on this Commission.

The Ethics Commission is charged with ensuring ethical standards for IOC members are clear and are applied. Its mission is to make sure there is accountability and transparency for the IOC. The Ethics Commission will meet on May 3rd to begin this process.

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Third, we have established the IOC 2000 Reform Commission. This Commission has a broad mandate to review all facets of the IOC to adapt the organization to the challenges of the new Millennium.

In conducting its top-to-bottom review of the IOC, this Commission will give serious consideration to the thoughtful and helpful recommendations of the Mitchell report. In fact the recommendations of the Mitchell Report are already on the agenda of the IOC 2000 Reform Commission. On behalf of the IOC, I want to thank Senator Mitchell and his colleagues for their good work and for their service to the world of sport.

Mr. Chairman, I want to assure you the IOC 2000 Reform Commission also will give every consideration to the helpful suggestions that you and other members of the Committee have offered on IOC reform. I hope we can continue the very constructive dialogue we have established and continue to work together toward our mutually shared goal of a revitalized Olympic Movement.

We plan to have a preliminary report of the IOC 2000 Reform Commission prepared for our June Session. Our goal is to have a final report, on which the full IOC can act at another Extraordinary Session, by year's end.

The views of the United States will be well represented on the IOC 2000 Reform Commission. Joining the Commission from the United States are four distinguished Americans: Henry Kissinger, Peter Ueberroth, Bill Hybl, and John MeAloon, a professor at the University of Chicago. I am proud to also have been asked to serve on this Commission.

Fourth, the IOC is committed to making its operations more transparent. Recently, the IOC released a financial report based on strict international accounting standards and audited by PricewaterhouseCoopers. In the future, a similar report will be released to the public every two years, on the cycle of the Olympic Games.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, all IOC members recognize if the IOC does not successfully reform itself, the Olympic Movement cannot be maintained. As someone whose life has been blessed by the magic of the Olympic Games, there is no sadder statement I can make.

The IOC has taken important steps to regain the public's trust in its stewardship of the Olympic Movement. More will be done. We must continue to work together because the magic of the Olympic Games must be sustained for future generations of athletes all over the world.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before the Committee. I would be happy to answer any questions that you, or other Committee members, may have for me.

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